

REMARKS

Applicant has carefully reviewed the Application in light of the Office Action mailed November 24, 2003. At the time of the Office Action, Claims 1-22 were pending in the Application. Applicant amends Claims 1, 6-8, 10-13, 18-20, and 22. Applicant also cancels Claims 4, 5, 16, and 17 without prejudice or disclaimer in an effort to expedite the prosecution of the case. It is important to note that the amendments are not the result of any prior art reference and, thus, do not narrow the scope of any of the claims. Furthermore, the amendments are not related to patentability issues, only further clarify subject matter already present, and have been made only to advance the prosecution of this case. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims and favorable action in this case.

Consideration of Information Disclosure Statements

Applicant has submitted two Information Disclosure Statements (IDSs) in connection with this Application. The first is dated October 3, 2000 and the second is dated August 13, 2003. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to review these IDSs and to formally indicate that these materials have been reviewed in the context of the pending prosecution. Applicant suggests the Examiner use a PTO Form 1449 to provide written notification to this effect.

Section 102 and 103 Rejections

The Examiner rejects Claims 1, 11, 12, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,884,177 issued to Hanley (hereinafter "*Hanley*"). The Examiner rejects Claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hanley* in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0034166 issued to Barany et al. (hereinafter "*Barany*"). The Examiner rejects Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hanley* in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0036834 issued to Das et al. (hereinafter "*Das*"). The Examiner rejects Claims 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hanley* in view of *Barany*. The Examiner rejects Claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hanley* in view of *Das*.

The Examiner indicated that Claims 5-9, and 17-21 recite allowable subject matter. Applicant has made some minor amendments to Independent Claims 1 and 11-13 such that they each recite subject matter identified as allowable by the Examiner. Additionally, their

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corresponding dependent claims are also allowable for analogous reasons. Amendments have been made to some of those dependent claims to correct minor antecedent basis issues or to resolve dependency concerns. Applicant reserves the right to comment on the reasons for the allowance of these claims at a future time should Applicant deem it appropriate to do so. Accordingly, all of the pending claims have been shown to be allowable as they are patentable over the references of record. Notice to this effect is respectfully requested in the form of a full allowance of these claims.

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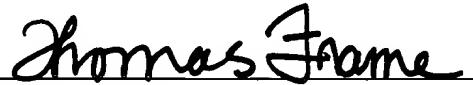
CONCLUSION

Applicant has now made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for immediate allowance. For the foregoing reasons and for all other reasons clear and apparent, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims.

Although Applicant believes that no fee is due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts, L.L.P.

If there are matters that can be discussed by telephone to advance prosecution of this application, Applicant invites the Examiner to contact its attorney at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,
BAKER BOTTs L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicant


Thomas Frame
Reg. No. 47,232

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CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:

2001 Ross Avenue, Suite 600
Dallas, TX 75201-2980
(214) 953-6675
(214) 661-4675 - Fax

